Doctor Mead:-

I esteem it a great privilege to appear in behalf of the President and Fellows of Middlebury College, and accept publicly, at the hand of your grandson, these keys representing your gift of this beautiful sanctuary, that we have met this day to dedicate to the service of Almighty God. For many years, especially since the old chapel ~~has~~ proved too small to hold even the half of our students, it has been the fond hope and the earnest prayer of the friends of the College, that in God's providence there might appear a man of the religious fervor and the financial ability requisite to meet this urgent need for a larger and more suitable edifice. To-day our ardent hopes are realized; our prayers are graciously answered. And to me it is especially gratifying that our benefactor is my beloved classmate, one to whom I am bound, now for fifty six years, by ties of the warmest friendship.

During these many years (which have passed with us so swiftly) the Heavenly Father has been pleased to grant you strength of mind and body, and varied opportunities for doing great service to your fellowmen. How well I recall the patriotic zeal with which, while yet a student in college, you enlisted in the War to maintain the Union of these United States. Later, as a well-trained physician, you served in another war---against the diseases that distress mankind; and by sound judgment and kindly sympathy achieved an enviable reputation in this beneficent calling. Still later your executive talent enabled you to build up a great industry, whose products are now used in every civilized portion of the world. More recently you have served the Commonwealth of Vermont, in the highest public office, with business sagacity, with fidelity, and with honor. But the noblest deed of all---the one for which future generations will hold you most in grateful remembrance---is the erection of this spacious and attractive Chapel, where the religious life of the College may find fitting expression and the stimulus of hallowed associations.

With grateful hearts, dear brother, we accept your generous gift; and we assure you of our earnest purpose so to utilize its opportunities for religious culture, as to promote the growth of earnest Christian character in the students of Middlebury College.---Here for generations yet to come the melodious bells of this Chapel shall sound out over the Campus and the Town the strains of Christian music, that from childhood have awakened in our souls the sentiments of faith and courage and earnest living. Through the coming years at morning prayer here shall

"the pealing organ blow
To the full voic'd quire below,
In service high, and anthems clear."

Here from Sabbath to Sabbath shall be proclaimed the blessed truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, opening the eyes of the earnest student to behold the glorious things of the Kingdom of God---awakening the spirit of reverence, of self-sacrifice, of brotherly love---inciting to noble endeavor in the service of God and of man.

The Lord reward you, dear friend, for all that you have done, or may yet do, for the good of others; and may the years of earthly life that still remain be your best years, filled with blessed memories and abiding peace.